

Gothenburg one of three burn school sites

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Gothenburg, Sargent, Gibbon and Wellfleet have been selected as the sites of for the 2010 Prescribed Burn Schools, according to Lara Fondow, Prescribed Burn Task Force president.

All schools will meet from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., with registration at 8:30 a.m. The cost is \$5 per attendee, with a free lunch provided. Admission is free for fire-department members.

Dates and locations are:

Monday, Feb. 1—Sargent Community Center, 314 W. Main St.

Tuesday, Feb. 2—Rowe Sanctuary, 44450 Elm Island Rd., Gibbon

Wednesday, Feb. 3—Bearly 'Nuff Café, 42034 S. Highway 83, Wellfleet

Thursday, Feb. 4—Monsanto, Highway 47, Gothenburg.

There also will be a firefighters night school Wednesday, Feb. 3, from 6:30 to 9 p.m. in North Platte. Attendance is free and an evening meal is included. The firefighters school will be at the North Platte Fire Department, 715 S. Jeffers.

Pre-registration is required to assure meals. To register, call the relevant Cooperative Extension office: Sargent, Custer County at (308) 872-6831; Gibbon, Buffalo County at (308) 236-1235; Wellfleet, Lincoln County at (308) 532-2683; Gothenburg, Dawson County at (308) 325-5501.

Lead instructor at both public and firefighter schools will be Dr. Charles "Butch" Taylor, director of the Texas A&M University Sonora Research Station. Taylor will cover goals and objectives of

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burning, fire behavior, weather factors, burning methods and techniques, and burn planning. He also will discuss the advantages of forming prescribed-burn associations, in which community landowners combine in a formal organization to pool labor, equipment and expertise to conduct private-land prescribed fires.

Taylor was the driving force behind formation of the Edwards Plateau Prescribed Burn Association, which today counts more than 600 members in the Texas Hill Country. Local instructors will cover safety, equipment, and how to organize and conduct a burn.

School participants who attend one class session and one of several training burns scheduled for later in the spring are certified to use task force equipment for a nominal fee to conduct their own prescribed fires.

The Prescribed Burn Task Force was formed in 1994. Since then it has held 48 schools attended by 1,426 students, while demonstration burns total 30,380 acres. The schools teach safe and effective use of fire as a management tool, and school graduates can use task-force burn equipment.

Instructors have included leading prescribed-fire experts from Nebraska and across the United States. The task force includes landowners and agency personnel primarily from Buffalo, Custer, Dawson and Lincoln counties.

Members include volunteer firefighters, Central Platte, Lower Loup, Tri-Basin and Twin Platte natural resources districts, the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, University of Nebraska Extension Service, Pheasants and Quail Forever, and the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District.